and acquire his target, lock on, and fire — the missile does the rest. Once the Javelin is fired, the gunner can take cover, move to a different position, or reload and acquire another target while the first missile is still in flight.

The Javelin's soft launch does not cause a dust cloud to attract the enemy's attention and the inevitable suppressive fire that follows. Further, without the significant backblast, overpressure, and toxic gases normally generated during the firing of a missile, the soldier can also engage targets from enclosures.

The Javelin is the most lethal antitank weapon in the world. With it, a soldier can kill any enemy tank using either a top-attack or a direct-attack mode of fire. Top attack is the preferred method of engagement, because the top of the tank is the most vulnerable. But if the tank should move to a position protected by overhead cover (under a bridge, for example), a Javelin gunner, with the push of a button, can select the direct-attack mode and engage the target from any angle. The weapon's lethality is further improved through increased missile speed, an increased rate of fire, and a new tandem warhead.

The Javelin program has received some bad press as a result of a combination of cost overruns and a lack of understanding of the tremendous advantages to be gained from the leap-ahead technology incorporated into the focal plane array (FPA) guidance system. FPA technology incorporates imaging infrared sensors and automatic in-flight tracking capabilities with a resulting fire-and-forget capability.

An extended engineering, manufacturing, and development test phase will

reduce the technological risks associated with the development of the FPA guidance system. To date, all of the guided flight tests have been direct hits. Targets have been engaged at ranges from 545 meters to 1,200 meters under day and night conditions, and the methods of engagement have included both the top-attack and the direct-attack modes of fire.

The type of technical testing currently being conducted requires the use of unmanned firing platforms. These platforms have been placed in the raised (standing) position, the lowered (prone) position, and the intermittent (kneeling) position. Firing has been successfully conducted from a room-sized enclosure with only one standard window and one standard door for ventilation.

The development and fielding of the Javelin — the most advanced antitank weapon in the world today — is the Infantry School's number one antitank weapon priority. The Javelin will begin replacing the Dragon in U.S. Army and Marine Corps Infantry units and Army combat engineer units worldwide beginning in the third quarter of Fiscal Year 1996. With it, the Infantryman will have the means to attack, kill, and survive on the combined arms battlefield of the future.

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Assuming Leadership

LIEUTENANT COLONEL COLE C. KINGSEED

Many commanders face upcoming changes of command with mixed emotions — trepidation, or a sense of loss, on one hand, and relief that they have survived the rigors of command on the other. My own emotions on giving up battalion command bordered on profound sadness. It was not so much that I minded relinquishing command. A unit needs the infusion of fresh ideas, whether the incumbent commander admits it or not. But I faced the distinct possibility I might never again serve as close to frontline soldiers. That prospect saddened me, because I truly enjoyed commanding young soldiers united in the common cause of defending this great nation.

As the inevitable day approached, I took time to reflect on the factors that contributed to what I believe was a highly successful command tour. Specifically, I pondered what advice I would give to junior leaders who were about to assume the responsibility of leading and commanding soldiers. The thoughts I offer here are based on personal experience gained during 19 years of commissioned service that included command of a rifle platoon, a combat support company, and an infantry COHORT battalion. These remarks are applicable to officers and noncommissioned officers serving in leadership positions from squad to battalion level. In an attempt to offer a manageable number of recommendations and lessons, I have sorted them into six general categories.

Command Vision. In assuming any position of leadership, a leader must have a clear vision of what and where he wants his unit to be in six, 12, and 24 months. This vision allows him to direct all of his efforts toward a single attainable goal.

The Army recognizes the importance of the concept of command vision and incorporates it into all precommand courses at battalion level. But there is no similar instruction for company commanders and first sergeants, and they are the ones who must implement battalion policy and focus individual training tasks to support collective training objectives.

The concept of command vision is equally important within the noncommissioned officer corps. Although squad leaders and platoon sergeants generally do not publish written philosophies, they should have a conceptual framework that provides central direction to their units.

Without such a vision, a young leader may deviate from implementing his training plan. For example, in my battalion, I made field marching an integral part of my program to build a battle-hardened, physically tough light infantry force. Twice during my command, several seasoned company commanders approached me to recommend that I cancel the monthly march. I patiently listened to their reasons but emphatically denied their requests. If they had proposed an alternative that would have achieved my goal, I would have accepted their recommendations. As it was, their only interest was in canceling the terrain walk.

Young leaders also have an obligation to plan for the period beyond their own command tours. Even knowing that their successors may alter their programs, those programs will greatly facilitate the continued development of a combat ready force.

Discipline. History has taught us that well disciplined armies are uniformly more successful than less disciplined ones. Discipline is the fabric that builds cohesive, motivated, and trained military units. Disciplined soldiers have trust and confidence in themselves and their leaders, and being confident of victory gives them an inherent psychological advantage over their adversaries.

Discipline is more than obedience to orders and respect for authority. It has an entirely different dimension that includes field discipline. General George Patton said it best when he stated that the purpose of discipline was to ensure obedience and orderly movement; to produce synthetic courage; to provide methods of combat; and to prevent or delay the breakdown of the first three in the excitement of battle. In short, disciplined units can absorb a solid punch and counterattack to destroy a numerically superior enemy.

Combat discipline is ensuring that fighting positions are dug to an appropriate depth and have overhead cover. It is sergeants checking and rechecking men and equipment before and during a mission. It is daily weapon cleaning in the field and the proper care of ammunition. It is also individual movement and fighting techniques.

Soldiers learn quickly whether a squad leader or company commander can meet the rigors of combat and whether he will compromise on the combat fundamentals. The soldiers may complain if their leader directs them to attack the same hill again in training because the platoon failed to meet the standard the first time. They may curse and grumble under their breath when he forces them to dig a little deeper or to improve the camouflage on the machinegun position. But the same soldiers will respect him because they know he will enforce the same high standards in a realistic combat situation.

Example. Leading by example is an indispensable quality of successful leaders. All the great leaders and battle captains had it. There is no challenge infantrymen cannot meet if their squad leader or company first sergeant is in the vanguard leading them onward. Leading by example applies to physical training tests, field maneuvers, athletics, and simply caring for soldiers and their families.

When a leader initially steps in front of a formation, the soldiers watch his every mannerism and idiosyncrasy. They notice whether his boots are shined, whether his haircut is within regulations, and whether he can complete the four-mile platoon run in the morning. First impressions are often lasting impressions.

Many units have NCO professional development programs that recognize individual excellence. As a commander, I placed a great deal of emphasis on NCO professional development and insisted that first sergeants post the names of the NCOs who gained special recognition. My purpose was not only to recognize excellence in the NCO corps but also to instill a sense of pride in the squads and platoons whose NCOs had made the extra effort to achieve professional excellence.

Soldiers know if their leaders wear Expert Infantryman Badges, if their squad leader is airborne or air assault qualified, if their lieutenant or platoon sergeant wears the Ranger tab. Leaders should take pride in setting an example for their men to emulate.

Today's soldiers expect sergeants and lieutenants to be physically fit, mentally tough, tactically and technically proficient. They expect their squad and platoon leaders to be able to negotiate unfamiliar terrain. Moreover, the soldiers have a right to expect their leaders to overcome seemingly insurmountable odds. After all, their lives

are in their leaders' hands.

Open Communications. A leader must not be afraid to talk *to* his soldiers, but should not talk *at* them. There is an importance difference. The former method develops teamwork, while the latter frequently develops into a "we-they" relationship. Informed soldiers will always perform at a higher level than soldiers in units whose leaders are reluctant to discuss training schedules, tactical plans, and other activities.

Strange as it may seem, many junior leaders are reluctant to take time to address their soldiers. Too frequently, lieutenants in my battalion would come to me and say it was the platoon sergeants' job to run the platoon in garrison while they, the platoon leaders, commanded the platoons in the field. I have a fundamental problem with this argument.

Many areas traditionally do fall into the purview of either officer or NCO business, but communicating with soldiers is not one of them. In this area, there is no such thing as officer business or noncommissioned officer business. There is only leader business.

Soldiers need to hear from their leaders. Periodically, they need to hear from them directly, without the filtering process that can distort much of the message. Often we hear the phrase, "What the captain meant to say ... " Why not let the soldiers hear what the captain meant to say from the captain himself? Then there will be no mistake about his guidance and intent. Something is drastically wrong in a company in which its commander does not speak to his soldiers several times a week.

As a battalion commander, I addressed the soldiers every month at the battalion awards ceremony and before every significant training event. This was an opportunity for me to outline the battalion's priorities and alert the soldiers to the major activities we had planned for the upcoming months. In addition, I met my first sergeants for lunch at the dining facility every month to solicit their views on the best way to improve training and the welfare of the soldiers. Similarly, I convened a meeting with the platoon sergeants quarterly. Although I frequently saw these leaders daily, these more formal meetings served as a forum that helped me foster bilateral communications with my key unit leaders.

As a general rule, I directed the company commanders and platoon leaders to talk to their respective units each Friday afternoon and conduct an after action review of the past week's activities and the highlights of the next

two weeks of training. I was not as successful as I would have liked, but it was extremely gratifying to see a second lieutenant gather his platoon and outline what was going to occur the following week. That lieutenant established a rapport with his men that would translate into teamwork in combat.

Consistency. Consistency is more difficult to achieve than many leaders imagine, but nothing irritates soldiers more than vacillating leaders who develop double standards. A simple rule is to be tough but fair.

In an attempt to establish uniformity of standards, I published written duties and responsibilities for leaders at all levels and then discussed my expectations with the leaders and the men. There was no doubt that I held the platoon sergeants personally responsible and accountable for the care and maintenance of all the battalion's crew-served weapons. Every platoon sergeant in the battalion knew that when I inspected his platoon sector my initial stop would be the M60 machinegun position. The sergeants knew it, the officers knew it, and the soldiers knew it.

The soldiers also had company standing operating procedures (SOPs) and periodic memoranda from me in which I stressed combat fundamentals. The standard for acceptable performance was always the same. The construction of fighting positions, the proper wear of field uniforms, notes on a night attack were all subjects that I discussed with the soldiers. It was a lot easier for them to understand a one-page note from the commander than a lengthy tactical SOP.

Consistency is not limited to the field. Soldiers routinely express their concern about alleged favoritism in the administration of non-judicial punishment, the awards program, and educational opportunities, to cite a few examples. Perfect consistency is probably not possible, since leaders must take into account overall performance and extenuating circumstances. Still, the goal should be to be as consistent as possible. If the unit understands the commander's standards, and if he takes the time to discuss his reasons for recommending one soldier for civil schooling or promotion and not another, he will avoid many of the problems that confront junior leaders.

Finally, a new commander should have fun leading soldiers. General Dwight D. Eisenhower lived by the simple maxim, "Take your job seriously, never yourself." A leader should understand the rewards of leading young soldiers before he assumes his leadership position. If he does, he will enjoy the time he spends with soldiers and will be far more relaxed. Moreover, the sense of pride he instills in his organization will increase his unit's combat readiness.

Commanding and leading soldiers is the greatest job in the greatest profession in the world. In addition to making a valuable contribution to the nation, leaders also make a profound impression on the soldiers they lead. The opportunities are endless, and their time with the soldiers passes all too quickly.

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